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Strengthening of the United Nations system

Letter dated 15 February 2007 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I am writing to request that you bring to the attention of the General Assembly the present letter and its annexes outlining my intentions with regard to strengthening the capacity of the Organization to manage and sustain peace and security operations and to advance the disarmament agenda.

The annexes provide clarification and additional detail sought by Member States in response to proposals I described in informal consultations with members of the General Assembly on 5 February 2007. Since that time, I have carried out extensive consultations with regional groups and Member States and have continued to refine the proposals in the light of suggestions, views and concerns expressed by Member States. I am grateful for the consultations you have undertaken in this regard and hope you will continue to facilitate the consultation process further. I am also hopeful that the Assembly will be in a position to expeditiously express its approval, in principle, of the attached proposals.

Annex I pertains to measures for strengthening the capacity of the Organization to manage and sustain peace operations. I will present, within a matter of weeks, a report further elaborating the proposals contained in that annex and providing further details, including their full financial implications, for the consideration of the General Assembly during its sixty-first session, in accordance with established procedures. It should be noted at the outset that I intend for these proposals to be resource-neutral with respect to the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007. Any additional resources required to strengthen the Secretariat, notably the new Department of Peace Operations and Department of Field Support, will be reflected in the forthcoming submission on the support account for peacekeeping operations, together with such requirements as may arise with the latest wave of growth in peacekeeping activity in the field mandated by the Security Council.

Annex II, on advancing the disarmament agenda: a new approach, underscores that general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international

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control remains a central issue on the global agenda. Current challenges point to the need to revitalize the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda through a more focused effort. I am personally committed to taking action on that agenda. I therefore intend to strengthen the work of the Organization in the area of arms control, disarmament, non-proliferation and related security matters and propose that the Department for Disarmament Affairs be constituted as a separate office in the Secretariat, with a separate budget section, headed by a High Representative.

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annexes as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 112.

(*Signed*) **Ban** Ki-moon

Annex I

Strengthening the capacity of the Organization to manage and sustain peace operations

I. Introduction

1. I intend to undertake a series of measures, outlined below, to strengthen the Secretariat's capacity to manage and sustain United Nations peace operations. I propose a reconfiguration of the current Department of Peacekeeping Operations to create two departments — the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Field Support. In conjunction with this realignment, I also propose measures to better align authority, responsibilities and resources presently assigned to various Secretariat departments engaged in providing support to peace operations with a view to facilitating clearer performance accountability.

2. The full implementation of these proposals, in my view, would lead to better planning, faster deployment and a more responsive system of support for tens of thousands of United Nations peacekeepers in the field, many of whom are deployed in austere and insecure environments. It would also lead to the more effective, efficient and transparent use of resources placed by Member States at the Secretariat's disposal to implement legislative mandates.

II. The urgency for reform

3. Since the moment I was honoured to be elected by the General Assembly as Secretary-General, I have been consulting widely with Member States, United Nations staff and outside experts to identify areas of the Secretariat in the most pressing need of reform. During these past months, no issue has been mentioned more frequently to me than the need to strengthen the Secretariat's capacity at Headquarters to plan, rapidly deploy, manage and sustain United Nations peace operations.

4. It is widely acknowledged that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has undergone more intensive reform and strengthening than any other part of the Secretariat, especially since the issuance of the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (the "Brahimi report") in 2000 (A/55/305-S/2000/809). Such reforms have enabled the Department to confront the enormous challenges of the past six years. It is important to recall that the objective of the 2000 reform agenda was to equip the Department with sufficient capability to launch one new multidisciplinary mission per year. Yet, the past 36 months alone have seen the start-up or expansion of nine field missions, with three additional missions currently in active start-up. Over the course of the next year, the number of personnel in United Nations peace operations could increase by as much as 40 per cent.

5. The unique nature of United Nations peace operations, and a proven record on the ground, has led the Member States to place ever-increasing demands on United Nations peacekeeping. The number of peace operations is at an all-time high, with almost 100,000 personnel in the field. It appears that the figure will rise still further in 2007. Last year alone, the United Nations started negotiations for memorandums of understanding with more than 100 troop-contributing countries, transported more than 800,000 passengers and 160,000 tons of cargo by air and operated more than

200 hospitals and clinics in the field. Furthermore, more than half of the staff of the Secretariat serve in field operations. No other multinational actor deploys the same number of military and civilian personnel. No bilateral partner engages in multiple field operations of such scope and complexity.

6. Because of the surge in demand, and despite the diligent efforts of our colleagues in peacekeeping, our system is dramatically strained and overstretched. This comes at a time when we can least afford it, as we plan and prepare for new peace operations in Darfur and elsewhere around the world. I have provided a more detailed account of the nature and implications of the surge in peacekeeping activity in my recently issued report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/61/668 and Add.1). There are many non-structurally-related initiatives proposed in that report that seek to strengthen the Secretariat's ability to address the surge in demand. These include measures to strengthen the operational capacity of Headquarters military and police components, the reinforcement of an integrated approach to support for the enforcement and reform of the rule of law and a greater focus on core business so as to enable the timely and sustainable drawdown of United Nations peace operations. I look forward to the Secretariat's dialogue with the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations on those initiatives, as well as on the relevant details regarding the implementation of the proposals outlined herein.

7. Without wishing to prejudge the outcome of Member States' deliberations in the Special Committee and other appropriate bodies, including the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, my consultations to date with Member States appear to indicate near consensus on one stark reality: the United Nations faces a real problem; the current approach to mounting and sustaining peacekeeping operations in the field will not sustain the explosive growth in the demand for and complexity of those operations without significant change.

8. The ability of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to keep up with the growing demand is challenged in nearly every dimension: the leadership — dedicated and hard-working — is impossibly overstretched. The Department's Senior Management Team, comprising a single Under-Secretary-General, two Assistant Secretaries-General, Director-level Military and Police Advisers, a Director of Change Management and a Director for Mine Action, oversee the vast stretch of operations in the field. This small group must manage and attend to every aspect of peace operations, large and small. Everything from the timely planning of missions to sensitive political negotiations and ensuring the timely delivery of critical spare parts can and do require their personal attention. They are, of course, supported by committed and expert staff at various levels, whose numbers also require strengthening, but the requirement for greater leadership and senior-level management is ever present. In addition, the growing complexity of field operations in every dimension — from the intricacies of multilayered political processes to the highly technical nature of support services to the specialized requirements necessitated by United Nations rules and regulations — place an added premium on senior personnel who are experts not only on substance but also on management.

9. Moreover, current systems in place to support operations in the field simply cannot keep up with the continuous, often simultaneous, demand for resources, services and staff that has grown several times over in the past three years alone.

Many examples exist in multiple areas. Routine procurement transactions are now stalled under the sheer weight of their volume. The budget process for field missions is now nearly year-round, as new missions continue to evolve and significant adjustments are made to existing missions. Annual mission staff turnover averages 30 per cent, with it being extremely difficult to keep some of our most difficult missions reliably staffed — especially in critical technical functions.

10. Compounding these difficulties, the diffusion of authority and responsibility among field offices and multiple departments at Headquarters make it impossible to fix responsibility for fully delivering timely and reliable supplies and services to the field. Simply put, there is no single place in the United Nations system right now with the full responsibility, authority and resources necessary to ensure that peacekeeping missions have what they need, when they need it, to succeed in their mandates. Having said this, I am mindful that appropriate controls to mitigate risk and ensure competent oversight must be maintained. But these measures are an incomplete guarantee for successful, efficient operations when the foregoing alignment of conditions is absent.

11. In essence, a variety of problems need to be addressed urgently. The foregoing discussion demonstrates that there is a clear case for consolidating all responsibility, authority and resources currently assigned to different departments in the Secretariat within a single department dedicated to planning, deploying, managing and sustaining all peacekeeping and related field operations. On the other hand, such a consolidation under a single Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations would fail to address the problem of managerial overstretching. It would not address the fact that other parts of the Secretariat manage field-based activities as well, albeit at a fraction of the scale. It could undermine the important independent role that must be played by such critical actors as the Legal Counsel or the Controller on behalf of the Secretariat as a whole, and it could challenge efforts to preserve Organization-wide standards and coherence.

12. I have thus concluded that the best way to reconcile these competing demands is through a substantial consolidation of authority, responsibility and resources under one Under-Secretary-General for Field Support heading a department that specializes in that function. I believe this move would dramatically reduce duplication of effort and provide focused attention to this vital area of expertise. In general, I firmly believe in the necessity to promote clearer lines of accountability and a sharper differentiation of roles and responsibilities among my most senior staff. At the same time, I recognize that the creation of two Under-Secretaries-General — where one presently exists — creates a new set of challenges, given the interrelated nature of operations and support in virtually all aspects of peacekeeping. The challenge is therefore to enable the two departments to fulfil their specialized responsibilities while concurrently ensuring that where the operational need exists they act as one, in an integrated manner at all levels. In reacting to my evolving thinking on the matter during informal consultations, Member States urged that I examine these challenges and propose means of addressing them while ensuring adherence to certain key principles. The key principles include:

- Clarity of departmental roles and responsibilities
- Unity of command and integration of effort
- Alignment of responsibilities and consolidation of resources
- Preserving Organization-wide standards and coherence

13. I am confident that the proposals outlined below will respond to the urgent challenges facing the Organization while adhering to these principles and making the Secretariat more responsive to the needs of our women and men in the field.

III. Proposed roles and responsibilities of the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Field Support

14. As I have discussed with Member States, I propose to establish a new Department of Field Support. The entirety of the current Office of Mission Support of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations would be transferred to the Department of Field Support, as would some additional resources from the Department of Management. The Department of Field Support would also require additional new resources funded through the support account for peacekeeping operations that would in any event have been requested for the Office of Mission Support and the Department of Management in direct response to the ongoing surge in peacekeeping demands.

15. Within the overall policy and oversight framework established by the Department of Management on my behalf, I intend to empower and hold accountable the Department of Field Support in undertaking the administration and management of field personnel, procurement, information and communication technology and finances for United Nations peace operations. Responsibilities and resources will continue to be centralized where services are provided Organization- or system-wide and where significant economies of scale are achieved.

16. This consolidation of support functions would lead to:

- More effective, coherent and responsive support to field operations
- More efficient management of Member States' resources
- Clearer lines of responsibility and accountability through the establishment of a single entry point for the full range of field support needs

It would also allow a separate, concentrated Department of Peace Operations to focus on the work it needs to do: strategic as well as day-to-day direction and management of peacekeeping operations; new mission planning; implementation of policies and standards; and fostering partnerships with a broad range of United Nations and non-United Nations actors, including regional organizations.

17. The creation of two departments would not only improve structural capacity, it would also give peace operations desperately needed additional senior posts. It would help to strengthen the heavily overburdened senior management team of today's Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which performs its tasks with outstanding commitment but under relentless and unsustainable pressure.

18. Taken together, these measures would bolster and improve the assistance that Headquarters provides to field missions and to field personnel contributed by the Member States. It would mean more and better policy guidance from a dedicated Department of Peace Operations; enhanced responsiveness from a Department of Field Support properly equipped and specialized to address mission support needs; and, by equipping the departments expeditiously with the human, material and

financial resources they need to do their jobs, a better way to ensure the safety and security of personnel and the prospects for successful mandate implementation.

19. By increasing capacity and designating clear responsibilities, we can also strengthen training and maximize oversight — both of which are essential in ensuring the highest standards of conduct and discipline among United Nations peacekeeping personnel. I am determined to ensure that we protect and uphold the sacred trust that needs to exist between the United Nations and the populations we serve and to implement our zero-tolerance policy on sexual abuse and exploitation.

20. The proposed organization charts for the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Field Support are attached (see appendix, sects. A and B). Detailed information outlining the roles and responsibilities of each of the components indicated in the charts has been prepared and can readily be made available.

IV. Unity of command and integration of effort

21. Clearly, these proposals can succeed only if the envisaged realignment preserves the principles of unity of command and integration of effort. There are very few operational issues and decisions that do not have significant support implications and vice versa. Success cannot be achieved if the two departments do not work in an integrated manner, at all levels, in the field and at Headquarters.

22. I intend to maintain unity of command and integration of effort at the field level by preserving the existing overall authority of my special representatives and heads of mission over all mission components, including the military, police and administrative components. Directors and Chiefs of Administration will report directly and exclusively to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General or Head of Mission. (This is a change in current arrangements, whereby Directors and Chiefs of Administration have a second reporting line to the Assistant Secretary-General for Mission Support on matters pertaining to the staff and financial regulations and rules.) It must be understood that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General or Head of Mission will be the ultimate authority at the mission level for all aspects of United Nations operations and support. In strengthening the authority of the heads of mission, I also intend to hold them accountable for proper resource management in accordance with established policies and procedures.

23. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General or Head of Mission will have a single, clear reporting line to the Secretary-General through the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations. Existing command and control arrangements applicable to force commanders in the field will not change.

24. To ensure unity of command and integration of effort at the Headquarters level, the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support will report to and receive direction from the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations on all issues that fall under the purview of United Nations peacekeeping. This arrangement will be an improvement over the current situation because the Department of Peace Operations will have directive authority over a department — the Department of Field Support — which will be more empowered and equipped than the current Office of Mission Support to address field support needs.

25. To facilitate the integration of effort between the joint decision-making bodies of the two departments, information-sharing mechanisms and shared resources will be set up. Joint senior decision-making bodies will be established to address cross-cutting and strategic issues on policy formulation, resources, information management, public information and engagement with United Nations and non-United Nations partners. Senior officials of the two departments will jointly address strategic and emergency issues in specific missions through regular meetings chaired by the Department of Peace Operations. Joint morning meetings at the Director level, weekly staff town hall meetings and shared Intranet resource platforms will be key information-sharing mechanisms to support unity of command and effort.

26. Certain resource capacities (which will include a mix of political, support, military and police personnel, as appropriate) will be shared by the two departments, encouraging unity of approach and policy coherence but also enabling efficiency gains. The two departments will share policy development as well as a common doctrine, best practices (in which the gender and HIV/AIDS advisers will remain) and evaluation and training capacities, all to be located in the Department of Peace Operations. They will also both draw upon a capacity intended to identify and develop strategic peacekeeping partnerships with a wide range of United Nations and non-United Nations actors as well as a public information and external relations support capacity located in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations. A crisis management response capacity will also be shared through the Situation Centre, located in the Department of Peace Operations. This will facilitate an integrated response to crises and emergencies in the field. The Department of Field Support, meanwhile, will be responsible for the management and administration of information management capacity for peacekeeping, as well as for conduct and discipline, and for providing secretariat support to the senior field leadership selection process. To facilitate close working relationships at all levels, the two departments will be co-located. A shared Executive Office will support the administration of both departments.

27. Arguably the most essential vehicle to unity and coherence is the establishment and reinforcement of integrated structures and processes. The central vehicle for the integrated planning and conduct of United Nations peace operations is the integrated operational team concept introduced in 2006 as part of the peacekeeping reform agenda entitled "Peace operations 2010". The Department of Peace Operations will be responsible for leading the establishment and management of integrated operational teams, bringing together expertise from both departments to provide integrated policy and operational backstopping for field missions as well as integrated advice for senior management. Integrated operational teams will also provide a single entry point for troop- and police-contributing countries and United Nations and non-United Nations partners to engage in the planning and conduct of integrated peacekeeping operations. Military and police personnel from the Department of Peace Operations and support specialists from the Department of Field Support will be outposted to integrated operational teams. The structure of the teams is depicted in section C of the appendix. Details of the envisaged roles and responsibilities of the teams can readily be made available.

28. The successful functioning of integrated operational teams will depend on the extent to which coherent guidance and processes are in place to enable integrated planning and operational support. The integrated mission planning process is

essential in this regard. Significant progress has already been made in developing the integrated mission planning process as a system-wide model for integrated United Nations operations. In order to ensure the continued development and implementation of the planning process throughout Headquarters and in the field, a dedicated integrated mission planning process support capacity will be established in the Department of Peace Operations to support integrated operational teams in providing coherent, responsive planning and support for United Nations peacekeeping operations. Integrated mission planning process guidance will be delivered at Headquarters and in the field to all relevant personnel of the two departments.

V. Interrelationships with other departments: alignment of responsibilities and resources

29. The measures set out above will help to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Field Support as well as the expectations of how they will work together as one. Likewise, it is essential to clarify the division of labour between the Department of Field Support and the Department of Management. The latter will continue to play its role on my behalf in providing the policy direction and oversight needed to ensure the appropriate as well as consistent implementation of General Assembly resolutions. Authority, responsibility, accountability and resources will be aligned to preserve Organization-wide coherence and economies of scale while ensuring operational effectiveness in the areas of human resources management, finance, information technology and procurement. Measures to satisfy these imperatives in support of United Nations peace operations are set out below. On broader management issues, the Department of Field Support will work together with the Department of Management, under the guidance of the Deputy Secretary-General, to ensure the system-wide coherence of management practices.

Field personnel

30. The responsibility for delivering mandates entrusted to peacekeeping operations rests on the shoulders of our personnel serving in the field. In many respects, we are only as good as the quality and timeliness of our deployments and our ability to get the right people to the right place at the right time. The dramatic expansion of peacekeeping activities in the post-cold-war period has demonstrated that the human resources management processes and systems designed over the course of nearly 50 years to meet the traditional and stable needs of our Organization were ill suited to respond to the current and projected operational tempo. Just as the failure to put boots on the ground can damage the preservation of a fragile peace, so too can the failure to deploy civilian personnel as rapidly as required damage significantly our ability to support those troops and carry out the full range of duties entrusted to this Organization in a post-conflict environment. Those we serve deserve to be sent our best and brightest, with urgency and diligence.

31. To address those needs, in 1994 the Office of Human Resources Management of the Department of Management delegated a broad range of authority to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. While the exercise of such authority has

led to the development of rapid-deployment mechanisms and administrative procedures that respond more adequately to operational needs, the dynamic evolution of the mandates of United Nations field operations demands that we improve still further our responsiveness and effectiveness. To this end, expanded delegated authority will be vested in the Department of Field Support to empower and hold it accountable for the recruitment, management and administration of field personnel. Decision-making authority will be given, in particular, in areas where the casework related to the recruitment or placement of staff is already being reviewed at both the mission and Headquarters levels or where, as certified by the Office of Human Resources Management, resident Department of Field Support expertise exists, for example, to design and classify jobs for United Nations peace operations against International Civil Service Commission and organizational standards. Processes will be further streamlined to eliminate review stages where little or no value is added.

32. The structures and systems needed to carry out this additional authority and fulfil the new roles and responsibilities already reside in great part in the current field personnel function in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The direction and management structure, field personnel support capacities and quality assurance mechanisms will, however, need to be strengthened to address the breadth and depth of the delegated authority and the size and scope of field mission human resources requirements and related responsibilities exercised at Headquarters and in the field.

33. Central authority for the establishment of Organization-wide policies and standards governing all human resources management matters will be retained by the Office of Human Resources Management, in line with its mandate as the central authority within the Secretariat to interpret and enforce the Staff Regulations and Rules and ensure consistency of standards Organization-wide. This includes the determination of contractual arrangements and conditions of service Organization- and/or system-wide and the establishment of salary scales for locally recruited staff, mission subsistence allowance rates and other benefits and entitlements. The Office of Human Resources Management will continue to represent the Secretariat before the General Assembly, the International Civil Service Commission, the High Level Committee on Management of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination and other bodies on Organization-wide human resources management and compensation issues, with support from the Department of Field Support on matters related to field personnel. The Office of Human Resources Management will also maintain its responsibility to monitor and evaluate the exercise of its delegated human resources management authority.

34. Finally, the Office of Human Resources Management will retain overall authority to establish, review and monitor overall health policy for the United Nations, including staff counselling, health and fitness standards, standards of health care and service delivery and clinical standards and qualifications for United Nations health-care professionals. The authority to plan and assess medical support for field operations and to approve and conduct medical evacuation and clearance procedures will be exercised by the Department of Field Support, in consultation with the Office of Human Resources Management.

35. The resources allocated to the Office of Human Resources Management related to the exercise of its responsibilities with respect to policies and standards

governing all human resources management matters, Organization- and/or system-wide conditions of service and oversight and monitoring of authority delegated to the Department of Field Support will remain intact. The allocation of responsibilities and resources related to internal justice will be dealt with separately in the context of the implementation of internal justice system reform.

Field budget and finance

36. The current budgetary process for peacekeeping operations does not fully meet requirements. Budget personnel from missions currently engage with two departments at Headquarters (the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Management) to prepare their budgets in a timely manner. Lines of communication need to be rationalized. Deadlines are often not met and budgets do not serve their appropriate role as strategic policy and management documents required to put resources to their fullest and most effective use.

37. To correct these shortcomings and to streamline the budgetary process, I intend to strengthen the capabilities of the Finance Management and Support Service so as to ensure that the Department of Field Support has the analytical and information-processing capacity required to prepare budget proposals and performance reports at a standard appropriate for submission to the General Assembly. Such strengthening would include greater attention to the application of consistent and coherent costing standards. In line with the best public practice principles, the Department of Management will retain the final authority to submit budgets to the Assembly on my behalf. In addition, the Department of Management will reorient its focus on and strengthen its strategic analysis of peacekeeping budgeting.

Field communications and information technology

38. The rationalization of processes also applies to the area of information and communication technology. The Information Technology Services Division of the Department of Management and the Communications and Information Technology Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations currently share responsibility for some aspects of the provision of information and communication technology services to field missions. For example, while the Communications and Information Technology Service is responsible for the management of over 350 satellite Earth stations located in the field, it does not manage the one at United Nations Headquarters, which provides a vital link from New York to the field. I intend to propose the streamlining and consolidation of this service under the new Department of Field Support to reduce the duplication of responsibilities and enhance the provision of reliable and uninterrupted service to the field. In addition, at present, the secure voice and data network, which provides secure services for the exchange of confidential information, is managed within the Information Technology Services Division. This capability is essential for the management of field missions and so should be consolidated, again, in the Department of Field Support. Finally, as the new office of the Chief Information Technology Officer takes shape, I will ensure that the Department of Field Support discharges its responsibilities in the area of field information management and systems consistently within the overall system-wide policy direction set by that office.

Field procurement

39. To address the multitude of time-critical field support functions in a responsive manner, procurement management must be streamlined and strengthened. I believe that integrating the procurement function with operational delivery will work best to support field operations.

40. I draw this conclusion in part because of the very different circumstances that drive Headquarters procurement as compared with procurement for field operations. Headquarters procurement is embedded in and relies on established and well-functioning markets operating under strong regulatory regimes where multiple vendors of high-quality products and services exist. Redundant and reliable lines of communication for product and service delivery readily support the procurement process, and contract failure can often be quickly mitigated with substitute vendors (while redress against non-performance is pursued). In this kind of commercial and physical environment, a premium can and is placed on the need to secure the best value.

41. In contrast, many — indeed most — of our peacekeeping and other missions in the field simply do not enjoy the same advantages. Markets are often weak, with some sectors completely non-viable. Regulatory frameworks suffer from a general absence of the rule of law, and lines of communication are long, subject to easy interdiction and increasingly dangerous. In this kind of commercial and physical environment, a balance must be struck among the equally important factors of value, quality and timeliness of delivery. In addition, contract failure can present a major impediment to mandate implementation, as many weeks and months are lost in the search for a replacement vendor. In my view, these factors argue strongly for a dedicated and separate capacity to deal with the specialized needs of field procurement.

42. I therefore intend to vest authority for field support procurement with the Department of Field Support by delegating procurement authority to that department as well as the authority to appoint procurement officers at Headquarters and in the field. This change in authority will entail a transfer of resources from the present Procurement Division in the Department of Management to the Department of Field Support. I do not, however, intend to promote or have duplicative structures. Therefore, a common vendor database, a joint vendor review committee, a common procurement manual that takes fully into account the needs of field procurement and common information technology systems for both field and Headquarters procurement will be maintained. A considerably strengthened and nearly full-time Headquarters Committee on Contracts, including representation from the Department of Field Support, will facilitate the handling of the growing volume of field procurement actions and will report to the Department of Field Support for peacekeeping procurement and to the Department of Management for other requirements. Procedures will be put in place to ensure that threshold levels for review by the Headquarters Committee on Contracts are established jointly by the Department of Management and the Department of Field Support and that appropriate priority is given to immediate review in cases of urgent operational requirements.

43. In addition, I intend to examine the possibility of establishing regional procurement offices to significantly enhance the procurement opportunities for developing countries and countries with economies in transition. More details

regarding this and the other responsibilities I am proposing for the Department of Field Support will be forthcoming in subsequent reports. I welcome the opportunity to discuss this and other aspects of this initiative during the current session of the General Assembly.

Support for public information components in field operations

44. I believe that the measures noted in the preceding sections substantially clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Peace Operations, the Department of Field Support and the Department of Management and the interrelationships between them. I believe that it is warranted to do so as well with respect to the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Public Information, in particular with respect to the backstopping of public information needs in peace operations.

45. An effective public information component is widely acknowledged to be a political and operational necessity for the success of any peace operation. It serves an invaluable function in explaining the mandate of the mission, establishing direct communication with host communities and promoting an atmosphere of constructive dialogue and reconciliation. The ongoing growth in peace operations also highlights the need for troop, police and financial contributors to be able to demonstrate to domestic constituencies the tangible improvements resulting from their participation in and support for United Nations peacekeeping, as well as explaining the measures in place to prevent and respond to misconduct that undermines confidence in the United Nations as a whole. The Brahimi report placed considerable emphasis on this subject in 2000, and since then Member States have increased the percentage of mission budgets dedicated to public information, which is often the largest substantive civilian component of peacekeeping operations. However, during this period of increase in the scope and complexity of public information work, the capacity at Headquarters to support field components and to ensure the best staff and most effective use of resources has remained static. In the light of these coming challenges, the current public information configuration at Headquarters is no longer tenable.

46. The responsibility for supporting the wide range of public information activities relating to peace operations is currently divided between the Department of Public Information and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. While the Department of Public Information has a limited number of posts dedicated to such activities, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has never had a dedicated public information capacity and has compensated for this by shifting internal resources in a limited and ad hoc manner to meet the demand. The unprecedented surge in United Nations peacekeeping has clearly overstretched the relevant capabilities of both departments. The consolidation of support resources that I propose will provide a much-needed opportunity to reclarify roles and maximize existing resources, leveraging the comparative advantages of each department and protecting the significant investment of the international community in public information in the field. To this end, I intend to establish a public affairs unit within the Department of Peace Operations that will assume responsibility for media relations, departmental publicity, external relations and corporate messaging/internal communications. The new unit will also provide advice on budgetary, administrative, staffing and technical matters to public information components in the field and integrated operations teams at Headquarters. The Departments of

Public Information, Peace Operations and Field Support will work jointly on planning, policy, training and evaluation. In line with its overall mandate for United Nations public information and in accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/121 B, the Department of Public Information will also continue to play an important role by providing strategic communications support to United Nations peace operations. The new unit in the Department of Peace Operations will allow for better use of the comparative advantages of all three departments and will promote greater efficiency, increase accountability and ensure more effective use of existing resources.

Preservation of existing arrangements with respect to other departments' allocated resources and responsibilities for support to peacekeeping

47. There are three other departments with resources allocated from the support account that have distinct responsibilities for Headquarters support to peacekeeping: the Office of Legal Affairs, the Department of Safety and Security and the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

48. In order to maintain the independence of the Legal Counsel and the role of the Office of Legal Affairs as the central legal service of the Organization, and thereby the consistency of legal advice provided throughout the Organization, I do not propose to transfer to the Department of Field Support or the Department of Peace Operations existing authority, responsibilities or resources presently allocated to the Office of Legal Affairs for support to peacekeeping. The provision of a small legal capacity in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support is required, however, to facilitate timely and effective interactions between the Office of Legal Affairs and the Department of Field Support on what will be an even greater volume of support issues requiring legal review and expert legal advice.

49. With regard to the safety and security of field personnel, I am mindful that a significant investment has been made only recently to upgrade the capacity of the United Nations to promote the security and safety of civilian personnel in the field, including through the establishment of the Department of Safety and Security. Therefore, I do not intend to change the roles and responsibilities of that department with respect to peacekeeping. However, the Departments of Safety and Security, Peace Operations and Field Support will need to review and revise certain existing standard operating procedures to take into account the proposed realignment of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

50. With regard to oversight and in accordance with its existing mandate, the Office of Internal Oversight Services will continue to provide internal oversight over the activities of the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Field Support through independent auditing, monitoring, inspection, evaluation and investigation of Headquarters activities and peace operations in the field. To that end, the Office will continue to review internal controls and management practices and, where necessary, make recommendations to promote the responsible administration of resources, assign accountability, improve transparency and enhance efficiency and effectiveness in the management of peace operations.

VI. Conclusion

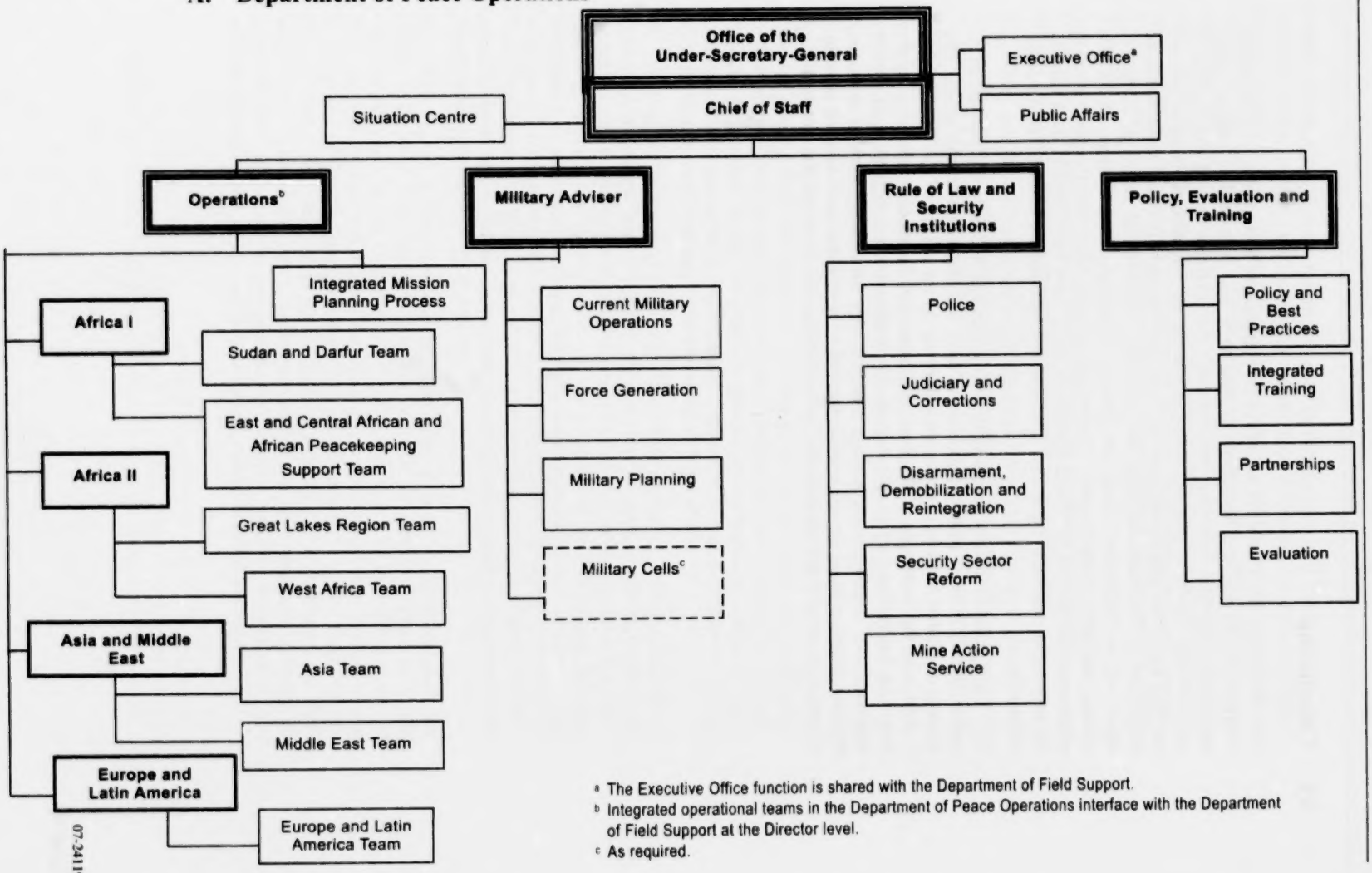
51. The proposals I have set out above may appear, at first glance, to be a radical overhaul of the way the Secretariat is structured and organized to support peace operations. Together, however, they represent the continuation and culmination of the collective efforts of Member States to address the fundamental issue of how we can best equip this Organization to carry out the responsibilities and tasks mandated in support of international peace and security. The Brahimi report of 2000, the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565, annex), the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1) and the peacekeeping reform agenda outlined in "Peace operations 2010" have been distinct stages during the process to establish responsive, effective and accountable United Nations peace operations.

52. I am mindful of my responsibility to contribute to the collective effort to enable United Nations peace operations to meet the challenges of the future. The success of United Nations peacekeeping depends on the ability of the Organization to evolve at the same rate as the new challenges and demands confronting it. We owe it to the millions of people around the world who put their faith in United Nations peace operations on a daily basis. I look forward to working with the Member States to build on this confidence and to ensure that peacekeeping remains a flagship of activity not only for the United Nations, but for the global community.

Appendix

Organization chart

A. Department of Peace Operations

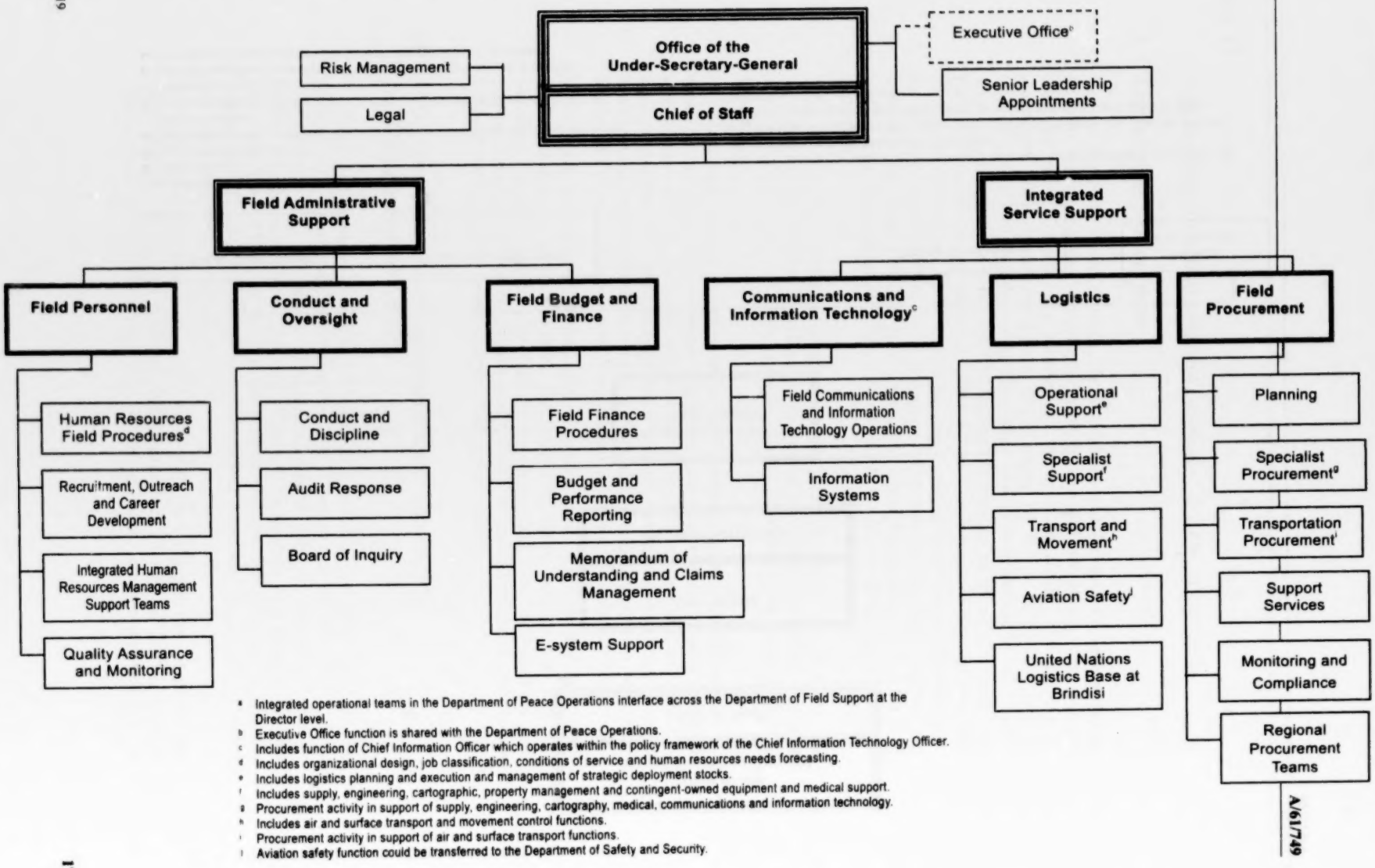


[a] The Executive Office function is shared with the Department of Field Support.

[b] Integrated operational teams in the Department of Peace Operations interface with the Department of Field Support at the Director level.

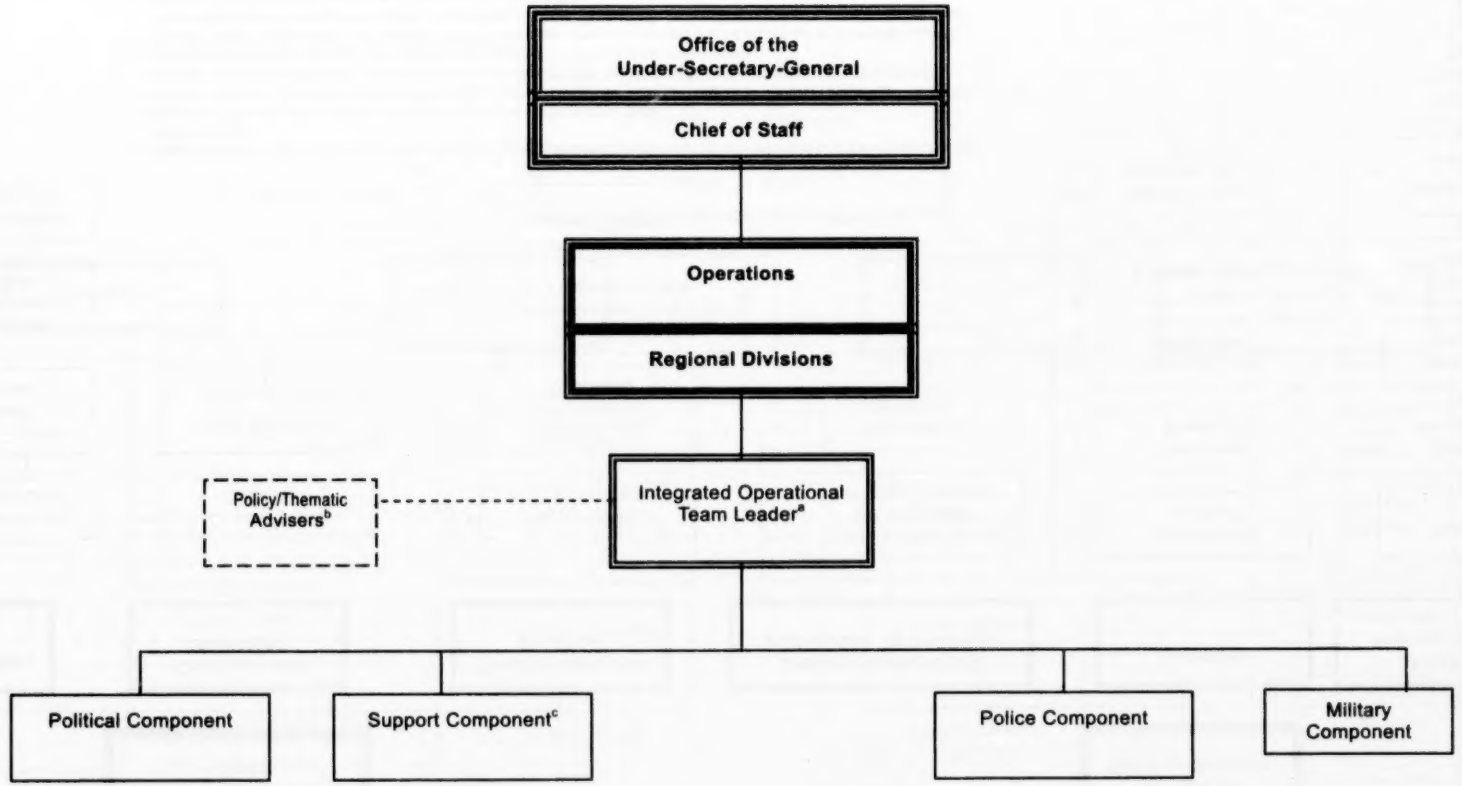
[c] As required.

B. Department of Field Support[a]



a Integrated operational teams in the Department of Peace Operations interface across the Department of Field Support at the Director level.
b Executive Office function is shared with the Department of Peace Operations.
c Includes function of Chief Information Officer which operates within the policy framework of the Chief Information Technology Officer.
d Includes organizational design, job classification, conditions of service and human resources needs forecasting.
e Includes logistics planning and execution and management of strategic deployment stocks.
f Includes supply, engineering, cartographic, property management and contingent-owned equipment and medical support.
g Procurement activity in support of supply, engineering, cartography, medical, communications and information technology.
h Includes air and surface transport and movement control functions.
i Procurement activity in support of air and surface transport functions.
j Aviation safety function could be transferred to the Department of Safety and Security.

C. Integrated operational teams



Composition
- Team leader
- Political Affairs Officers
- Two military officers — Military advice to integrated operational team and liaison to Military Division
- Two police officers — police advice to integrated operational team and liaison to Military Division
- One Administrative Department of Field Support mission support specialist
- One logistics Department of Field Support mission support specialist

[a] Each of the seven operational teams is headed by a team leader reporting to the Director of one of the four regional divisions in Operations.
[b] Integrated operational teams will draw on the expertise of the policy and thematic advisers.
[c] Support includes administration and logistics personnel and other Department of Field Support specialists as required.

Annex II

Advancing the disarmament agenda: a new approach

I. The urgency of reform

1. At the 2005 World Summit, Heads of State and Government underscored a difficult and challenging moment for disarmament and non-proliferation and the need for more decisive international efforts in those fields. The absence of meaningful outcomes in certain areas (for example, the failure of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament on its priorities, the need for new impetus for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and the outcome of the United Nations Conference to Review Progress made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects) underscores the need for determined leadership at the highest level to revitalize the disarmament agenda.

2. This deeply alarming situation makes clear the need to revitalize the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda through a more focused effort. I believe in the need for a greater role and personal involvement of the Secretary-General in this regard.

3. I strongly believe, therefore, that a new emphasis needs to be imparted on the essential functions of the existing Department for Disarmament Affairs through a combination of high-level commitment and appropriate institutional support. This must ensure that the United Nations has a strengthened institutional foundation and management mechanism to succeed in its central role and primary responsibility in supporting Member States in their disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.

4. I have thus concluded that what is needed is an office headed by a High Representative so as to maximize the flexibility, agility and proximity to the Secretary-General required to facilitate ongoing and new disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. It would also allow for more systematic interaction between the Secretary-General and the High Representative.

II. Proposed role and responsibilities of the Office for Disarmament Affairs

5. For the reasons articulated above, a managerial reorganization of the Department for Disarmament Affairs will be effected so that the new office, with a direct line to me, will ensure effective interaction with my office and relevant United Nations departments. The new office will be in place to respond effectively to the priorities of Member States in the disarmament and non-proliferation area and will ensure effective interaction with the General Assembly, the Security Council and other legislative bodies.

6. The establishment of the Office takes fully into account current trends and developments, as well as Member States' expressed interest in finding ways to address new challenges in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. Its

mandate will continue to derive from the priorities established in relevant General Assembly resolutions and decisions in the field of disarmament, including the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, adopted by consensus at the first special session devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2). The programme of the Office will also be guided by the United Nations Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2) and will take into account other relevant United Nations resolutions.

7. In this connection, it is recalled that the fifth preambular paragraph of General Assembly resolution 61/60 indicated that the convening of a fourth special session of the Assembly devoted to disarmament "would offer an opportunity to review, from a perspective more in tune with the current international situation, the most critical aspects of the process of disarmament and to mobilize the international community and public opinion in favour of the elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and of the control and reduction of conventional weapons". In the seventh preambular paragraph of the resolution, Member States reiterated their "conviction that a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament can set the future course of action in the fields of disarmament, arms control, non-proliferation and related international security matters".

8. The Office will retain the current five branches of the Department for Disarmament Affairs (see appendix) and functions and will continue to implement existing mandates. It will continue to provide substantive and organizational support for norm-setting in the area of disarmament through the work of the General Assembly and its First Committee, the Disarmament Commission, the Conference on Disarmament and other bodies. The Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva will continue to act as the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Conference, reporting directly to the Secretary-General on matters pertaining to the Conference.

9. Under a High Representative, the work would be re-energized for simultaneous action on both disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects. The two objectives are inextricably linked, and neither can advance without the other. The Office will continue its work in support of universal adherence to international disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements and their full and effective implementation.

10. Weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, continue to be of primary concern to the Organization. The Office will continue to assist Member States in promoting, strengthening and consolidating multilaterally negotiated principles and norms in all areas of disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects in order to help maintain international peace and security and to contribute to global efforts against terrorism. It will also support efforts aimed at further advancement in nuclear disarmament, which will contribute to consolidating the international regime for nuclear non-proliferation and thereby to ensuring international peace and security.

11. Conventional weapons, especially small arms and light weapons and landmines, continue to receive increased attention from the international community in view of the havoc that these weapons are inflicting on peoples' daily lives, particularly in conflict-ridden regions. The Office will continue to support efforts for the further implementation of the Programme of Action adopted at the United

Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, as well as Member States' efforts to establish common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms. It will promote transparency, based on the principle of undiminished security for all, and confidence-building measures in the field of disarmament. Through its regional centres for peace and disarmament, the Office will assist Member States in promoting regional approaches to disarmament, non-proliferation in all its aspects and regional and international peace and security.

12. The Office will continue to contribute to efforts to enhance disarmament expertise in Member States, particularly in developing countries. New emphasis will be put on tailored dialogue, cooperation and assistance to Member States in order to help States build capacity to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as to tackle the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

13. The Office will also carry out such emerging mandates as Member States may entrust to the Organization. Any programmatic adjustments would result only from the successful conclusion of negotiations in the appropriate multilateral forums.

III. Functions and responsibilities of the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

14. The functions of the High Representative will be focused on four core areas:

(a) Policy development and coordination functions in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects in support of the Secretary-General;

(b) Advocacy of disarmament and non-proliferation issues with Member States and civil society;

(c) Promotion and support of multilateral efforts on disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons;

(d) Promotion and support of disarmament efforts in the field of conventional disarmament, especially with regard to major weapons systems, small arms and light weapons and landmines.

15. The High Representative will be able to operate with more flexibility and have more systematic interaction with Member States. He or she will also have more flexibility in establishing cooperation and conducting dialogue with Governments and other interested actors, and would act as a facilitator in finding solutions to issues of concern.

16. As a diplomat and manager, the High Representative will actively seek to engage the international community, bringing together key actors within and outside the United Nations to promote more concerted and effective responses to challenges in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects.

17. Proximity to the Secretary-General will allow for a strengthened advocacy role in mobilizing political will to overcome the stalemate in disarmament and non-proliferation. The High Representative will also act as a catalyst with civil society organizations, which play a vital role in building and activating public opinion for disarmament and non-proliferation. He or she will undertake appropriate advocacy

work/initiatives in partnership with the relevant parts of the United Nations as well as with civil society, the media, academia and foundations.

18. At the same time, the High Representative will encourage and facilitate the development of networking and foster international cooperation to support efforts on all arms control, disarmament, non-proliferation and related security matters.

19. The High Representative will also actively encourage and support Member States in their efforts to improve the United Nations disarmament machinery and to make it more responsive to the needs of the Member States.

20. The High Representative will report directly to the Secretary-General and will:

(a) Be responsible for all the activities of the Office as well as its administration;

(b) Provide the Secretary-General with advice and support on all arms control, disarmament and related security matters and, in that respect, represent the Secretary-General, as required;

(c) Undertake appropriate advocacy work to advance the disarmament agenda, in partnership with the relevant parts of the United Nations as well as with civil society, the media, academia and foundations;

(d) Provide authoritative analysis and assessment of developments in the field of disarmament and international security for policy guidance and decision-making purposes;

(e) Represent the Office in the meetings of the Senior Management Group, senior advisers' meetings, the Executive Committee on Peace and Security and the Policy Committee;

(f) Act as the focal point between the Secretariat and Member States for information on all arms control, disarmament and related security matters;

(g) Act as a focal point between the Secretariat and global and regional intergovernmental organizations on all arms control, disarmament, non-proliferation and related security matters.

IV. Administrative and financial matters

21. The proposal will be implemented within existing resources. The allocation of responsibilities will be as currently contained in the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 in order to allow the Office for Disarmament Affairs to fulfil its responsibilities with respect to the mandates entrusted to it by the General Assembly and to preserve its ability to undertake the necessary activities in that regard. The reorganization into the new office will not affect its objectives for the next biennium, as approved in the strategic framework for the period 2008-2009 (see A/61/6 (Prog. 3) and resolution 61/235).

V. Conclusion

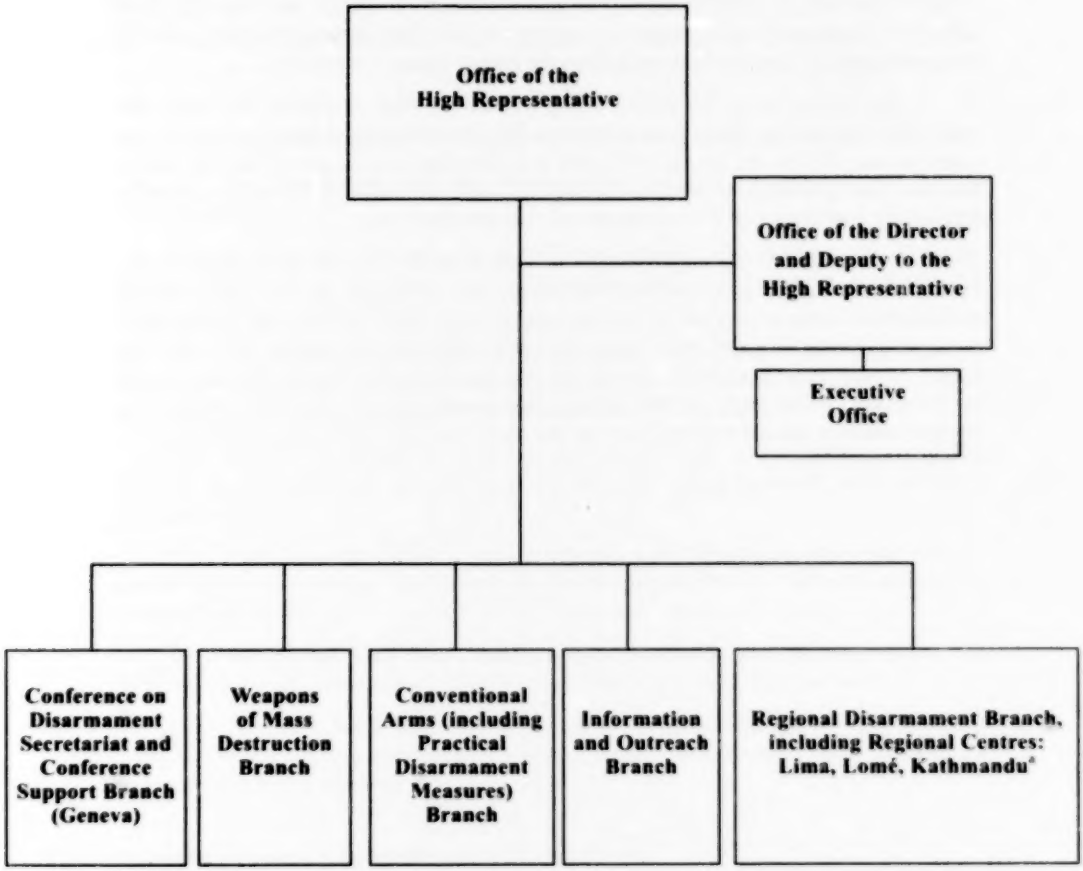
22. The proposal I have set out above may appear, at first glance, to weaken the way in which the Secretariat is structured and organized to support disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. I believe, however, that the new approach will lead to greater visibility of disarmament and non-proliferation issues and that the new office will have a stronger impact in support of Member States' efforts to address the threats and challenges that are before the international community.

23. I also believe that the elements set out above help to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs as well as the expectations of how he or she will play a leadership role in providing the policy direction and guidance needed to ensure the implementation of General Assembly resolutions in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation.

24. I am mindful of my responsibility to contribute to our collective effort in this important area. The full implementation of this proposal, in my view, would strengthen existing synergies across the field of peace and security and, at the same time, would help to build more functional and effective cooperation with Member States, as well as with global and regional intergovernmental organizations. I intend to undertake a thorough review of the implementation of mandates under this reorganization proposal and to report on the outcome at the sixty-third session of the General Assembly.

Appendix

Office for Disarmament Affairs: organizational structure for the biennium 2008-2009


Office of the High Representative
Office of the Director and Deputy to the High Representative
Executive Office
Conference on Disarmament Secretariat and Conference Support Branch (Geneva)
Weapons of Mass Destruction Branch
Conventional Arms (including Practical Disarmament Measures) Branch
Information and Outreach Branch
Regional Disarmament Branch, including Regional Centres: Lima, Lomé, Kathmandu[a]

[a] Operating from New York.